

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An isolated nucleic acid fragment encoding a sulfite reductase comprising a member selected from the group consisting of:

- 5                   (a) an isolated nucleic acid fragment encoding an amino acid sequence that is at least 95% identical to the amino acid sequence set forth in a member selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2, 4 and 6;
- (b) an isolated nucleic acid fragment that is complementary to (a).

2. The isolated nucleic acid fragment of Claim 1 wherein nucleic acid fragment is  
10 a functional RNA.

3. The isolated nucleic acid fragment of Claim 1 wherein the nucleotide sequence of the fragment comprises the sequence set forth in a member selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, 3 and 5.

4. A chimeric gene comprising the nucleic acid fragment of Claim 1 operably  
15 linked to suitable regulatory sequences.

5. A transformed host cell comprising the chimeric gene of Claim 4.

6. A sulfite reductase polypeptide comprising all or a substantial portion of the amino acid sequence set forth in a member selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID  
NO:2, 4 and 6.

20 7. A method of altering the level of expression of a sulfate assimilation protein in a host cell comprising:

- (a) transforming a host cell with the chimeric gene of Claim 4; and
- (b) growing the transformed host cell produced in step (a) under conditions that are suitable for expression of the chimeric gene

25 wherein expression of the chimeric gene results in production of altered levels of a sulfate assimilation protein in the transformed host cell.

8. A method of obtaining a nucleic acid fragment encoding all or a substantial portion of the amino acid sequence encoding a sulfate assimilation protein

- 30                   (a) probing a cDNA or genomic library with the nucleic acid fragment of Claim 1;
- (b) identifying a DNA clone that hybridizes with the nucleic acid fragment of Claim 1;
- (c) isolating the DNA clone identified in step (b); and
- 35                   (d) sequencing the cDNA or genomic fragment that comprises the clone isolated in step (c)

wherein the sequenced nucleic acid fragment encodes all or a substantial portion of the amino acid sequence encoding a sulfate assimilation protein.

9. A method of obtaining a nucleic acid fragment encoding a substantial portion of an amino acid sequence encoding a sulfate assimilation proteinscomprising:

- (a) synthesizing an oligonucleotide primer corresponding to a portion of the sequence set forth in any of SEQ ID NOs:1, 3 and 5; and
- (b) amplifying a cDNA insert present in a cloning vector using the oligonucleotide primer of step (a) and a primer representing sequences of the cloning vector

wherein the amplified nucleic acid fragment encodes a substantial portion of an amino acid sequence encoding a sulfate assimilation protein

10. The product of the method of Claim 8.

11. The product of the method of Claim 9.